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Biased Survey Example

After reviewing the poorly created survey, there are several problems that can be identified that can lead to error in interpreting responses (Shivani, 2025). For example, unclear or unbiased questions can cause participants to respond inaccurately or misunderstand what is asked. One issue is leading questions, which can influence participants to choose a specific answer (Hillmer, 2024). For example, a question that signals a preferred response can influence participants to agree instead of sharing their actual opinion. This type of bias can reduce data accuracy because responses are influenced by the question wording instead of the participants real experience (Hillmer, 2024). For example, participants might agree with what is written because it sounds correct, even if it does not reflect their opinion. Another issue is combined questions, where two concepts are asked in one question (Shivani, 2025). For example, asking if someone is satisfied with a job and salary, which makes it confusing to know which part the person is answering. This can confuse participants and make the results harder to interpret (Shivani, 2025). The third issue is unclear wording, which can cause participants to understand questions differently (Ponto, 2015). For example, words like “often” or “regularly” can mean different things to different people. Another issue is poor response options, where answer choices can be limited or not include all possible responses (Shivani, 2025). For example, if a survey does not include an option that matches a participant’s experience, they might choose an answer that is not accurate.

To avoid these issues in research, I would use clear and neutral wording, avoid combining multiple questions, make sure that response options are balanced and inclusive. For example, I would ask one question at a time and provide answer choices that can reflect the range of experiences. Overall, using clear scales such as “once a week” or “daily” can help participants to respond accurately. I would also pilot test the survey to check for any potential biases before distribution. For example, pilot testing can show confusing questions or missing response options, which can help with adjustments before the full survey is conducted (Shivani, 2025). Pilot testing can help to make sure the survey results are more accurate and that errors or bias are reduced (Shivani, 2025).

References

- Hillmer, B. (2024, October 30). Leading practices: Understanding and reducing bias in your surveys. Alchemer. <https://help.alchemer.com/help/survey-bias>
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